

What is claimed is:

- 1    1. A keyboard for use with a medical software application program,  
2    comprising:
  - 3       a first plurality of keys having a first visually distinguishing characteristic,  
4       wherein keys in the first plurality of keys include an icon representative of an  
5       image display function such that when a key from the first plurality of keys is  
6       activated, the image display function represented by the icon associated with the  
7       activated key is performed by the medical software application program; and  
8       a second plurality of keys having a second visually distinguishing  
9       characteristic, wherein the second plurality of keys include an indication  
10      representing an image navigation function such that when a key from the second  
11      plurality of keys is activated, the image navigation function associated with the  
12      activated key is performed by the medical software application program.
  
- 1    2. The keyboard of claim 1, further comprising a third plurality of keys  
2    having a third visually distinguishing characteristic, wherein the third plurality of  
3    keys includes an indication representative of an image manipulation function  
4    such that when a key from the third plurality of keys is activated, the image  
5    manipulation function represented by the indication associated with the activated  
6    key is performed by the medical software application program.

1    3.    The keyboard of claim 2, further comprising a fourth plurality of keys  
2    having a fourth visually distinguishing characteristic, wherein the fourth plurality  
3    of keys includes an indication representative of a patient information function  
4    such that when a key from the fourth plurality of keys is activated, the patient  
5    information function represented by the indication associated with the activated  
6    key is performed by the medical software application program

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8    4.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein the first visually distinguishing  
9    characteristic comprises a first color.

1    5.    The keyboard of claim 4, wherein the second visually distinguishing  
2    characteristic comprises a second color, wherein the second color is different  
3    from the first color.

1    6.    The keyboard of claim 2, wherein the first visually distinguishing  
2    characteristic comprises a first color, the second visually distinguishing  
3    characteristic comprises a second color different from the first color, and the  
4    third visually distinguishing characteristic comprises a third color different from  
5    the first and second colors.

- 1    7.    The keyboard of claim 3, wherein the first visually distinguishing
- 2    characteristic comprises a first color, the second visually distinguishing
- 3    characteristic comprises a second color different from the first color, the third
- 4    visually distinguishing characteristic comprises a third color different from the
- 5    first and second colors, and the fourth visually distinguishing characteristic
- 6    comprises a fourth color different from the first, second and third colors.
  
- 1    8.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein each key in the first plurality of keys
- 2    includes an icon representing a radiological display function.
  
- 1    9.    The keyboard of claim 8, wherein the radiological display functions are
- 2    associated with predetermined body regions.
  
- 1    10.   The keyboard of claim 9, wherein the predetermined body regions are
- 2    selected from the group consisting of one or more of the head, neck, lung, liver,
- 3    knee, abdomen, bone, spine, mediastium, pelvis and whole body.
  
- 1    11.   The keyboard of claim 8, wherein the radiological display functions include
- 2    window and level presets for display of a radiographic image.
  
- 1    12.   The keyboard of claim 1, wherein the first plurality of keys further
- 2    comprise a text label indicative of the display function associated with the key.

1    13.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein each of the first plurality of keys is  
2    adjacent to at least one other of the first plurality of keys.

1    14.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein the image navigation functions are  
2    selected from the group consisting of one or more of first image, last image, next  
3    image, previous image, next series, previous series, first series and last series.

1    15.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein at least one of the indications for the  
2    second plurality of keys comprise a text label.

1    16.    The keyboard of claim 15, wherein at least one of the indications for the  
2    second plurality of keys further comprise an icon.

1    17.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein each of the second plurality of keys is  
2    adjacent to at least one other of the second plurality of keys.

1    18.    The keyboard of claim 2, wherein the image manipulation functions are  
2    selected from the group consisting of one or more of retrieve patient  
3    information, measurement tools, synchronization of images, image filters and  
4    presets, cross correlation, 3D reconstruction.

1    19.    The keyboard of claim 18, wherein at least one of the indications for the  
2    third plurality of keys comprise an icon.

1    20.    The keyboard of claim 19, wherein at least one of the indications for the  
2    third plurality of keys further comprise a text label.

1    21.    The keyboard of claim 2, wherein each of the third plurality of keys is  
2    adjacent to at least one other of the third plurality of keys.

1    22.    The keyboard of claim 3, wherein each of the third plurality of keys is  
2    adjacent to at least one other of the third plurality of keys.

1    23.    The keyboard of claim 1, wherein the medical software application  
2    program comprises a radiographic software application program.